

AGVA Elections Finally Bow After OK of Swann Authority

The ballots for the forthcoming elections in the American Guild of Variety Artists were permitted to be finalized by a ruling from an arbitrator, who declared that secretary-treasurer Russell Swann was the final authority on eligibility of candidates as provided by the AGVA constitution.

Ruling was made by Joseph Wildebush of the American Arbitration Assn., who held a hearing in the AGVA office on Friday (23) following a complaint by executive board member Sally Rowe, who had protested the nominations of Dick Jones, running as regional veepee from the Detroit area; Johnny Woods, running against Jack Haley for the post of exec veepee; Don George, Doris George and Bobby Faye, all running for regional vicepresidents.

As a result, the election is permitted to start with balloting beginning Sat. (1) and ending Dec. 21.

The revised list of candidates has George Burns running as honorary president; Mickey Rooney as honorary first v.p.; Alex Fisher as honorary second veepee; Ann Corio, Ethel Ennis, Jane Lea and Rachela Relis-Bardach as honorary third veepee.

Penny Singleton is being opposed for executive president by David Hanson, Eddie Rio, and Arthur Tracy. Woods and Haley are running for exec veepee; incumbent Russell Swann is being opposed as secretary-treasurer by Joey Pal Ferrigno, Charles E. LaVine, Dodie Marshall and Susan Theobald.

Region One veepee incumbent Paul Benson is being opposed by Charley Slavin and Dorothy Smith; Margie Coate, Lew Dick and Matt Hyland, latter a paid shop steward at Radio City Music Hall, N.Y., are running as region 2, v.p. Mary Landy, Bob Mitchell, Sally Rowe and Lou Testa are seeking the vicepresidency of region 3; Dick Jones and Guy Gibby, are running for region 4 veepee; Bob Freed and Joe Lush, the region 5 vicepresidency; Smiley Daly and June Stephens, region 6; John Bondi, Harry Lifty Lewis and Charles Raymond, region 7.

Candidates from region 8 are Linda Compton, Blaze Fury and Mike Priddy, Ernie Heldman, Vincent Lee, Tina Marie and Clifton Phardin, region 9; Billy Sloan and Steve Stephens, region 10; Valetta Doyle, Doris George, Wendy Hollenbach and Douglas Sullens, region 11; Billy Barty, Fred Castrelli and Jay Vincent region 12; Rita Conde, Bobby Faye, Susan Marshall, Guido Salmaggi and Tex Sax, region 13; Frank Cook and Don George, region 14; Leo Rivet is unopposed in region 15; and Violet Murray and Ralph Shaw are in region 16.

Innsbruck Stadium Too Cold So Turners Switch

Frankfurt, Nov. 27.

The Ike & Tina Turner show is generally so hot that it even melts ice. But despite the warm notes, it was decided to move the performance out of the scheduled site at the Ice Stadium in Innsbruck.

Reason was that because of an upcoming ice hockey game, it would be impossible to isolate the cold floor from the hot performers. Final performance of the American singing team was rebuked instead at the Black Forest Hall in Karlsruhe.

S.C. State Fair Slates Name Talent For 1974

Columbia, S.C., Nov. 27.

Near national record longevity hasn't developed any lethargy for South Carolina State Fair which recently closed its 104th consecutive season. William Cantey, reelected president, promptly posted plans for a new auditorium as well as bigger grandstand and midway facilities as top objectives for 1974.

"We're going to bring in big name performers," he said. Construction contracts and bookings are due in early 1974 it was stated. Fair's sponsor remains the same as for the last 104 years State Agricultural & Mechanical Society.

Japan's Kokusai Revue Clicks In Johannesburg; Pulls \$450,000 Advance

Johannesburg, Nov. 27.

Impresario Yango John was right with his hunch that South African audiences would go for a Japanese spectacular. His latest import, The Kokusai Revue, grabbed a \$450,000 advance sale before the curtain rose at Johannesburg's 1250-seat His Majesty's Theatre.

Preem was attended by cabinet ministers and Dame Margot Fonteyn, then in the country to dance with French partner Attilio Labis in "Swan Lake." Prime Minister John Vorster and a large party are to see the show later this month.

Now in its seventh week, the revue continues to draw crowds twice nightly at an \$11 top. Originally skedded for a 22-week South African run, Kokusai will now fill all that time in Johannesburg, then spend a further eight weeks in Durban and Cape Town.

Yango John previously scored with Victor Borge. For his next venture he plans a series of six concerts to be given in the three major centres by Charles Aznavour. In Johannesburg the singer will play the 2,277-seat Colosseum Theatre. Dates are lined up for next March.

His TVer Helps Foxx Nab SRO Honolulu BIZ

Honolulu, Nov. 27.

Redd Foxx played to sparse audiences at the Forbidden City niter here 3½ years ago. On Friday (23) the comic gave three virtual sellout performances at the Sheraton-Waikiki hotel's Hawaii Ballroom for VIP Shows Inc. at \$10 a seat for each show.

His "Sanford and Son" tv showcasing is credited for the big difference.

Jetta Brenner Upped

Jetta Brenner has been named general manager of the Sheraton Russell Hotel, N.Y. She's the first woman to hold that post in the Sheraton chain.

She started in the Sheraton chain as a sales rep and coordinator at the Sheraton Biltmore, Providence then moved to Boston as a convention coordinator for the Sheraton Boston.

Ray Bryant Trio to open Dec. 3 at the Top of the Sixes, N.Y., for three weeks.

Ms. Booker

Cleveland, Nov. 27.

Claire Rothman has been named director of booking for The Coliseum, Cleveland, to be responsible for setting all events at the arena, which is slated to open in September of next year.

She had been the business manager of the Spectrum, Philadelphia. Charles Jowaiszas, former exec at Madison Square Garden, N.Y., heads the Cleve Coliseum.

REDS END 'OPERA'; TAIWAN GOES ON, AMAZING ACROBATS

At the N.Y. City Center the misleading term, of course, is "opera." By no stretch of the western imagination can the choked emissions from the throat be considered singing and it passes as "falsetto" only as a semantic convenience. Having disposed of this misnomer factor the question of what the National Chinese Opera Theatre is offering American audiences, at \$8.95 top through the management of Harold Shaw, may be considered. Call it a remarkable display of colorful costumes and make-up, ancient folklore, squeaky musical instruments and some of the most amazing acrobatics ever viewed in New York. As the performance accelerates after the English explanations the athletic side becomes sensational, crowd-rousing and provides a full and sufficient reason for bringing this troupe over from Taiwan.

It would probably be only justice to single out a few of the more belief-challenging soloists, but the program credits are long, hard to decipher and liable to mistaken identities. Enough to say that several of the artists could stop the show, any show, anywhere in the world.

A number of recent facts should perhaps be cleared up. This is a type of entertainment now apparently annulled as undesirably "traditional" by Red China itself although there was a "Peking Opera" company in Europe 20 years ago. It had crossed on the Trans-Siberian Railroad, courtesy of Soviet Russia. Then reviewed in Zurich, Switzerland by the present Variety critic. It was not unlike the present Taiwan company which came into the N.Y. City Center last Tues. (20), though scenically more elaborate.

While Chinese Taiwan continues the traditions of antiquity the Maoists have elected to forget. There was still another "Peking" echo in the U.S. recently, a group from Hong Kong which fell into the hands of an inept management and stranded on the west coast. That news may not have helped Shaw. Be that as it may. What he is offering is a first class, historic, exotic, socko entertainment. Good for general audiences. Ideal for campuses. —Land.

Rinker Joins Tokyu

Honolulu, Nov. 27.

Robert N. Rinker, top exec of the Hawaii Hotel Assn. for six years, will move to Tokyo to become executive v.p. of Tokyu Hotels International.

Tokyo, actually a unit of a giant Japanese business conglomerate, owns the Hawaiian Regent hotel and the big Shirokiya department store here.

Bernad Gollin has joined CBS International's April Musikverlog in Germany as general manager.

Four Cleve. Cabaret Theatres Spark Niter Biz With Legiters

Cleveland, Nov. 27.

Ringling Bros.' Blue Unit Ends 10-Mos. U.S. Tour

Venice, Fla., Nov. 27.

The blue unit of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus arrived back at winter quarters last Wednesday (21) following a 10-month tour of the country. Show closed Sunday (18) in Cleveland.

The unit's performers will get about 10 days' rest before starting rehearsals for the circus' 1974 edition which will open in St. Petersburg in January.

Webb Hotels' Sig Front Urges Promo Campaign To Spur Tourist Travel

Dublin, Nov. 27.

Frustration at the thought that 70,000,000 Americans have never made a trip more than 200 miles from their homes, while about half of them have the time and the money to do so was expressed by Sig S. Front, v.p. sales and marketing, Del Webb Hotels International, Las Vegas, before the Hotel Sales Management (International) convention here.

People are not being motivated to travel, he pointed out, and their small fears in not knowing how to cope with such things as hotel reservations and bookings are keeping them at home. Instead, they spend their money on trailers, camping equipment, pools and luxury items.

Front proposed an organization of hotelmen, airlines, travel agents, car rental operators and others to develop an educational and promotional campaign to get more people on the move.

Headliners Come Clean At Continental Baths

The Continental Baths, N.Y., have signed a trio of headliners for one-day engagements. Sarah Vaughan has been pacted for Dec. 19; Melba Moore, Jan. 17 and Freda Payne goes in Feb. 20.

The Baths, where customers, mostly male sit around and watch the entertainment with bath towels, is now adding cocktails to its availabilities.

NELSON FETED

Abbott, Tex., Nov. 27.

Willie Nelson's hometown honored the C&W singer at its 1973 school homecoming, and some 10,000 country music fans turned out for the 12-hour stage show to augment the town's 375 population.

Appearing on stage with the Atlantic recording artist were Waylon Jennings, Billy Jo Shaver, Jerry Jeff Walker, Kinky Friedman, Johnny Bush, Michael Murphy and Kenneth Threadgill, among others.

Peggy Lee III

Illness has forced the postponement of Peggy Lee's opening at the Empire Room of the Hotel Waldorf-Astoria to tomorrow night (Thurs.). She had been slated to open last night (Tues.).

Gladys Knight & The Pips are being held over for the three extra nights until the Lee preem.

Four new dinner and cabaret theatres are revitalizing live entertainment in the greater Cleveland area with stage shows. One of the catalysts is the downtown Palace Cabaret Theater which opened Nov. 5 with "Ben Bagley's Decline and Fall of the Entire World as Seen Through the Eyes of Cole Porter." First performance boomed up a sellout attendance and gross of \$19,000 in the 400-capacity cabaret with benefit tickets selling at \$50 per head.

For the first week, in which seats and buffet meals were scaled from \$10 to \$15, the musical show pulled over 2,000 and a gate of \$6,000. This spot, located in the 51-year-old Keith-Albee Palace vaudeville theater, uses its stage for table buffet dinners and the orchestra pit as a bar. The revue is staged in the reconstructed lobby.

It is operated by the Playhouse Square Assn. that also runs the nearby Playhouse Square Cabaret. Civic organizers of the P.S.A., headed by Ray Shephardson, picked a winner by opening with "Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris." It recently broke all records for stage productions in Cleveland's history by doing near-capacity biz for exactly 104 weeks to date. Reservations are moving so rapidly for the Christmas holidays, Shephardson said, that "we probably will keep 'Jacques Brel' and the Cole Porter show running until next summer."

Carousel Dinner Theater in suburban Ravenna, formed by David Fulford and Everett Susco, also has been whirling up profits during the past six months. They did it by importing such names as Tab Hunter, currently appearing in "Tender Trap" for three weeks.

Next attractions at the Carousel, with seats scaled at \$8.95 to \$10.95 on Saturday, are Van Johnson in "There's a Girl in My Soup," Nov. 27 through Dec. 31; and Nanette Fabray in "Plaza Suite," Jan. 15 through Feb. 3. Performances Tuesdays through Sunday by repertory includes many supporting players who have appeared in Fulford's Canal Fulton Summer Arena Theater.

Although the Sheraton-Cleveland Hotel's Cocktail Theater is a newcomer, its initial production of "Cabaret" also has been flourishing. Since its inception Sept. 28, it has played to approximately 3,000 people who paid \$4 to \$6 per ticket in three rooms used by the musical stock company.

They include the 254-capacity cocktail theater, based in the former Bronze Room; the 375-seat Gold Room and the Convention Grand Ballroom, accommodating 600 visitors. Barry Gordon and Ronnie Barrett, co-producers and founders of the troupe, have a

(Continued on page 54)

\$2-Mil Expansion Hikes Silver Springs' Tourism

Ocala, Fla., Nov. 27.

ABC Scenic & Wildlife Attractions Inc., owner of Silver Springs lure near here, stated last week that a \$2,000,000 expansion and remodeling of the tourist facility has resulted in doubling the lure's economic influence in the area.

ABC noted that attendance is now 1,500,000 a year. The company said it has authorized \$5,000,000 for expansion of the lure between now and 1976.